

# **A REVISIONIST HISTORY OF PROHIBITION:**

**The True Story Of A Public Servant**

**Named Al Capone And**

**A Gangster Named Eliot Ness**

**by Alexander Baron**

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# A REVISIONIST HISTORY OF PROHIBITION

## To The Reader

There is no vested interest behind this study; the current writer gave up alcohol in January 1986, and, save for the odd helping of sherry trifle, has not knowingly consumed it, and, barring a miracle, never will again, for the remainder of his undoubtedly short life. This pamphlet has been written for one purpose and one purpose alone, to set the historical record straight. In particular, to exonerate the great American pioneer and free market entrepreneur Alphonse Capone, one of the most maligned men in history, from the lies and calumny that have been directed against him by both the media and successive administrations of the increasingly fascistic United States Government. And to expose the antecedents and fraudulent methodology of his most notorious slanderer and persecutor, the so-called *Untouchable*, Eliot Ness. (1)

## Preamble

It is a sad fact that, unlike science, history has no internal consistency or logic. In science, the quest for an ordered universe is paramount. However many glitches and bumps there may be on the road to truth, knowledge and understanding; however many anomalies the scientist may encounter; ultimately, there is a supreme order and consistency about the paradigm he constructs. In science, energy flows from hot to cold. Always. Water flows downhill under the influence of gravity. Always. The velocity of light *in vacuo* is constant for all observers. Always.

Unlike science, the study of history yields no immutable paradigms, rather history is interpreted, rewritten and censored at the behest of the latest dictator or unelected ruling *elite*, or at the whim of some highly acclaimed *historian*, who may be little more than a state-sponsored polemicist. History is even interpreted according to fads. Thus, Hiroshima and Nagasaki were *necessary* acts which shortened the course of the Second World War and saved countless lives, while the well-documented atrocities committed by the Nazis and their Japanese allies against innocent civilians were abominable acts beyond the pale which deserved only to be punished with the utmost severity, and remembered for all time as obscenities and the ultimate crimes against humanity. (2)

The inconsistencies and double standards of history relate not only to acts of supreme evil, but to individuals, some of whom are to be shunned and scorned for eternity merely for choosing the lesser of evils, while others are to be canonised for perpetrating acts of such gross inhumanity and wanton destruction that it beggars belief anyone should want to remember them at all, except perhaps to spit on their graves. One such monster was Napoleon Bonaparte, who at best was a comic opera figure who walked around with his hand inside his trouser saying "Not tonight, Josephine". Few and far between are the Frenchmen who will today speak of Napoleon in anything but awe, yet his futile crusades ruined France and robbed it of the finest flower of its youth, over a hundred thousand of whom perished in his Russian campaign alone, and were left frozen to death on the road to Moscow. The same can be said of Hitler who also invaded the Soviet Union; Churchill, who rejected Hitler's offers of peace, which would have saved countless lives; and indeed many other figures throughout history.

On a far less grand scale, many people who have caused and spread untold misery, want and destruction have also been canonised, while at the same time, the most industrious of businessmen, whose only *crime* has been to satisfy a public demand - to give the people what they want - and to make a few quid for themselves in the process, have been damned as Public Enemy Number One, denounced to high heaven as racketeers and gangsters, and portrayed time and time again on celluloid, in pulp fiction and in regular history books as enemies of humanity no less monstrous than either Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin. One of most notorious of these aforementioned agents of misery was a state-sponsored thug named Eliot Ness; and one of the most industrious and finest of these industrious entrepreneurs was Al Capone.

## The Historical Background To Prohibition

It is a widely held misconception that certain Islamic countries which are *dry* are so because of the Draconian penalties which they enforce against the trade in and consumption of alcohol. Occasionally, the media will pick up on a story of a Westerner who has been caught selling or drinking hooch in Saudi Arabia and been sentenced to a flogging on account of it. This results, usually, in righteous indignation about how uncivilised these A-rabs are, and appeals for clemency. The Saudis - and others - are worried about the encroachment of Western ideas and ideals on their great civilisation, with good reason it might be added, for with television, canned coke and microchips comes all manner of spiritual syphilis - in particular the dreaded materialism so beloved of Marxist polemicists - and a subsequent plummeting of moral standards.

It is though as certain a fact as any event that has yet to come to pass that if the prohibition on alcohol were lifted in Saudi Arabia tomorrow, it would not be instantly awash with booze; the good citizens of that country would not be transformed overnight into winos; in short, there would be no alcohol problem, and probably the only people who would indulge it in any great quantity are those who do so already, ie foreign nationals. In short, it is not the legal prohibition in Saudi Arabia which stops people drinking alcohol, but a deeply ingrained, centuries' old social taboo. In short, if you are a good Moslem - as most Saudis are - you do not drink alcohol. Allah - peace be upon Him - will not let you into Heaven if you imbibe.

Notwithstanding the fact that religion is itself a form of mind control, the Western mind has always been averse to Prohibition. Be that as it may, the history of social change has always been - for the most part - one of small, noisy, and at times, vicious, minorities, who have sought to impose their will on the established order, and often on the broad mass of the people, by fair means or foul. This has not always been a bad thing; if it were not for a certain amount of bullying, blacks would still be slaves, women the mere chattels of men, we would all have to doff our caps to the lord of the manor, and the king, emperor, or other tyrant, could lop off our heads at his whim. However, whilst officers of the law must always walk the thin blue line, the line between the movement for equality before the law, equality of opportunity, human liberty and other such inalienable rights, and those of the tyranny of well-organised minorities, is nowhere thin. The right to do as one pleases with one's own body and property is one thing; the right to do as one pleases with someone else's body and someone else's property is another entirely.

In the Old World, the *curse* of the lower classes was gin, and in London, England, in the 1720s, gin shops hung out signs guaranteeing to make their customers "drunk for one penny and dead drunk for two pence". (3) It should never be forgotten that at this time, the lot of the working people was incredibly hard, far more so than it is today. Leaving aside the absence of such niceties as aspirin, proper sanitation, video recorders, and a fortnight a year in Benidorm, if you were a mere pleb in the 18th Century, you didn't have much to look forward to, and the prospect of getting dead drunk for a mere two pence (4) was not an unhappy one.

There are, though, those who would rather see ordinary people living lives of misery in order that they may reap some illusory pie in sky, and they were no thinner on the ground in 18th Century England (or indeed in any previous century) than they are anywhere throughout the West today. Unlike their Islamic counterparts, the zealots of the Western World were more concerned with keeping the tithes rolling in to the churches than of opening the doors of Paradise to the common people, and they embarked on a crusade against the demon drink such as the pious Saudis have never done, (5) a crusade which, in all probability, crossed the Atlantic with the *Mayflower* a century earlier. (6)

As early as April 1735, a law came into force prohibiting the "importation of rum and brandies" into Georgia. (7) The New World was then governed from London, of course. Even today with faxes and other Earth-shrinking technology, it is no easy task for a nation to rule directly over a colony from so great a distance. But in those days, the enforcement of unpopular, unworkable and downright immoral laws by the ruling clique an ocean away was doomed to end in abject failure. In Georgia, the colonists refused to believe there was anything criminal in running rum and bootlegging, so that "Violators of the law, when caught, invariably demanded trial by jury, the result being that there were almost no convictions. In several cases where judges *ordered* verdicts of guilty, the jurors refused to obey." [Emphasis added] (8)

However, all was not yet lost for old misery, and there soon developed a home grown temperance movement whose propaganda, as well as bamboozling local government officials and the common people, spilled over into the medical profession. Absurd stories about drunkards self-immolating appeared in British and French medical journals and were accepted uncritically by doctors who should have known better but either didn't or were happy to peddle them to their patients in order to frighten them into forsaking the demon drink. (9) Actually, the *demon*

drink was at one time known as *the good creature of God!* (10) Rum was even the principal medium of exchange in the 18th Century slave trade, and at one time a Negro slave on the African coast could be had for a few gallons. (11) Obviously, if people will sell their kinfolk into slavery for a barrel of hooch, it must be highly regarded for its medicinal and other properties.

A *local-option law* came into force in the New World as early as 1829, in the State of Maine. This was the first partially successful attempt at Prohibition, allowing each county to vote itself wet or dry. (12) This sort of propaganda, that a state, city or some other arbitrary area has a *right* to vote itself either wet or dry, is tempting, but contains a colossal fallacy, the fallacy that just because you are in a minority, (13) a majority has the *right* to take away your rights by a *democratic* vote. The great American Libertarian Ayn Rand put down this nonsense in a nutshell: "Individual rights are not subject to a public vote; a majority has no right to vote away the rights of a minority..." (14)

In 1895, the Anti-Saloon League, founded by "preachers, teachers and businessmen" was preaching its message, as usual for the *benefit* of the working class, but it took until 1919 for Prohibition in the form of the *Volstead Act* (after its framer) to become law. This made it illegal to manufacture or sell any drink with more than .5% alcohol content, and provided a fine of \$1,000 or 6 months in gaol for breaking this *law*. (15)

## Prohibition: Bad Law Breeds Contempt For All Law

So this is where Al comes in. Alphonse Capone was born in January 1899. (16) The son of Italian immigrant parents, he would later open a secondhand shop in Chicago, and such was the climate of intolerance in that city that by the time Alphonse was thirteen, *reformers* had pressurised the city administration into closing its red light district. (17) Alphonse Capone was a big kid, and by all accounts a rough one. As a youth he had his face slashed in a Brooklyn barber shop, the memento of which earned him the name Scarface Al. (18) As Alphonse - henceforth Al - grew up, Prohibition came in, but there had been *rackets* before this, and Al started his career in so-called crime running errands for a small time racketeer named 'Diamond Jim' Colosimo. (19)

With the start of Prohibition, Colosimo moved into liquor, but in May 1920 he was murdered, and his shoes were filled by one Johnny Torrio who took on Al as a junior partner. (20) Five years later, Torrio was seriously wounded in a revenge attack, allegedly by the rival O'Banion gang. He decided to quit the mob, and at the age of twenty-six, Al Capone was *numero uno*. (21)

By this time, the evil effects of Prohibition had long been recognised, although it would be another eight years before this piece of repressive legislation was consigned to the trashcan of history where it belongs. One of its *most* evil effects was the fierce competition it induced for increasingly scarce resources, which led to businessmen cutting each others throats (and killing each other by other means) in order to service their customers. (22) Another was, of course, the widespread disrespect it earned for the law from ordinary citizens. Even Eliot Ness himself recognised this, for he wrote in his autobiography, "Doubts raced through my mind as I considered the feasibility of enforcing a law which the majority of honest citizens didn't seem to want." (23)

Ness also cited a contemporary source which claimed that "Chicago has the most corrupt and degenerate municipal administration that ever cursed a city - a politico-criminal alliance formed between a civil administration and a gun-covered underworld for the exploitation of the citizenry." (24) It shows the sort of man he was that, knowing this, and holding such doubts (in his words), that in 1928 at the age of twenty-six, Ness willingly took charge of the special detail Prohibition Unit when it was transferred from the Treasury to the Justice Department. (25) In any case, this claim, that the so-called underworld exploited the citizens of Chicago is not supported by the slightest empirical evidence. These so-called gangsters were simply businessmen who were providing a service. How were the citizens exploited? Were they forced to attend speakeasies and drink home brewed hooch? Did this *gun-covered underworld* do exactly that, make them part with their money at the point of a gun? Stuff and nonsense!

The simple fact is that the bootleggers, the numbers operators and the brothel keepers were providing bona fide services which nobody *had* to patronise. Such *crimes* are victimless, as far as they are crimes at all. Nobody's property rights are violated by drinking alcohol; nobody is brought into hatred and contempt, neither individuals nor the public peace are threatened. These were (and in some places still are) *crimes* only because the state said they were. By the same token, at a certain time in ancient Egypt it was a *crime* for parents to conceal the birth of their first born son, who was to be slain by order of the Pharaoh. A *law* that violates the rights of the individual in such an arbitrary manner may be a statute, but it is not law in any meaningful sense.

By the time Eliot Ness arrived on the scene, Al Capone was *the man*. Although he was well known, respected, and even loved, Capone was a modest sort who never forgot his humble origins. He was listed in the Chicago telephone directory as a secondhand furniture dealer, although if anyone ever phoned they would be told "We ain't open today". (26) Likewise, when questioned about his business activities, Scarface Al would reply humbly "I'm only a secondhand furniture dealer". (27) Contrast this with Ness, for, while Al Capone was content to serve the public and live unassumingly, Ness loved publicity and often turned up on brewery raids with cameramen. (28)

### Al Capone, Gangster: Innuendo, Rumour And Unsupported Assertions. And Outright Fraud

Following the retirement of Johnny Torrio, Capone liquidated the O'Banion mob - who were allegedly responsible for the murder attempt. According to Ness. (29) But whatever Ness may say about Capone's role in the liquidation of the O'Banion gang, it is *common knowledge* that Capone ordered the St. Valentine's Day Massacre of the rival Bugs Moran gang. For example, the prestigious *Encyclopedia Americana* reports that seven members of the Moran gang were gunned down on the express orders of Capone. (30) To this day, ask almost any American - and a great many non-Americans - who was Al Capone? - and they will reply that he was a gangster. Then ask them what criminal offences Al Capone was ever convicted of, and see what they say.

One criminal offence Al Capone was certainly never convicted of was murder. Capone died in 1947, and Ness published his memoirs ten years later. It is certain that while Scarface Al was still warm in his grave, all manner of innuendo was being thrown around about his responsibility for this murder or that, indeed such allegations were made frequently when he was alive, and probably on more than one occasion to his face. In his book, Ness estimated that Capone had been responsible directly or indirectly for the murders of up to three hundred men by 1929, (31) a figure that is too absurd to comment on. Capone himself once remarked that he had been accused of every death except the casualty list in the World War. (32)

What are the facts? One fact, as stated, is that Al Capone was never convicted of murder, indeed, the only *crime* in any meaningful sense that he was ever convicted of was carrying a firearm, and the circumstances under which this conviction was obtained stink to High Heaven.

In May 1929, Capone was picked up for carrying a pistol. As the right to bear arms is written into the American Constitution, this was obviously only a technical offence. Yet within sixteen hours of his arrest, Capone had been tried, convicted and sentenced to a year in gaol. (33) And this for a first offence. (34) In his fantasy prone autobiography, Ness comments that when Capone, "America's most feared gangster" was gaoled, his organisation wasn't broken up but was run by his brother. (35)

When a *feared gangster* or someone equally obnoxious is sent to gaol the thing that usually happens is that people crawl out of the woodwork to denounce him. True, Capone was only sent down for a year, but this would have been long enough for the authorities to pressure enough members of his (supposed) empire to turn on him, and for the police and the Feds to gather enough incriminating testimony from his alleged victims to keep him in gaol for a great deal longer. What happened though? Scarface Al served his time then came out and took up right where he'd left off, that's what happened.

Although he was sentenced to a year in gaol, Ness admits that Capone - America's most feared gangster, remember - was out in ten months with remission for *good behaviour*. (36) The simple fact is that this *feared gangster* was a perfectly respectable and indeed extremely industrious entrepreneur who had ended up on the wrong side of the law for a purely technical offence, he had been caught carrying a firearm, which, again, the US Constitution is supposed to have guaranteed him the right to do. It is also clear that few of his contemporaries could have a more bona fide reason for carrying a firearm than Al Capone.

It is a well-known truism that mud sticks, and that however baseless the allegations made against someone and however forcefully he may be exonerated, there will always be somebody who reasons no smoke without fire. By the time of his arrest, Capone had been built up into one of the most evil men alive by a combination of state-sponsored disinformation and sensationalist gutter press drivel. There must have been quite a few hoods, self-styled avengers or simply people out to make a name for themselves who would have thought nothing of gunning him down in cold blood, or perhaps attacking him in a less repugnant but equally disturbing manner. Surely such a man in such circumstances is entitled to carry a handgun for his own protection?

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As well as the bust, the sentence meted out to Capone was clearly politically motivated. The fact that the authorities were able to manhandle him in so brutal a manner and deal with him in such a summary fashion is also evidence of, if not outright proof that, he was in reality no manner of gangster but an honest businessman who, after being harassed by the authorities for years, and quite likely in fear of his life on account of his being demonised, was simply caught out doing what any right-minded person would have done under the circumstances. It has become *de rigueur* to portray Capone as a bloated, Machiavellian schemer surrounded by smart lawyers, craftily outfoxing the dedicated efforts of the squad of special agents to track him down and bring him to justice. Police officers, city officials, even judges, are said variously to have been on his payroll. Yet the bottom line is that when the chips were down, he couldn't even get bail on a minor firearm rap. The poor man obviously never knew what hit him. Incidentally, the usual tariff for such an offence was three months, (37) yet he was sentenced to a year. Surely this is further proof that Capone was anything but a criminal mastermind?

However, even after the state's repressive apparatus had succeeded in nailing him for this trivial offence, it wasn't satisfied. According to Ness, on Capone's release, a police chief was said to have promised to clap him straight back in gaol as soon as he arrived home. Twenty-five men staked out his home for four days until it was decided that he wasn't going to show up. (38) This is outrageous; in the first place, if Capone had been a wanted man he wouldn't even have been released from gaol, the authorities would have found some further charge to bring against him or used some other device to make sure he wasn't allowed back on the street. The simple fact is that Scarface Al, having served a vicious sentence for a piddling misdemeanour, was targeted by an over officious police officer with a grudge against the son of a poor Italian immigrant who had made good while he was stuck in a brown-nosing job while masquerading as a guardian of public morality.

Furthermore, by taking no less than twenty-five men off the streets (where they could have been catching real criminals), in order to stake out the home of a man who had not even able to commit a crime for the best part of a year - even if he'd wanted to - by doing this, this police chief wasted valuable resources to harass an already harassed and essentially innocuous businessman. In short, he allowed his irrational hatred of the successful - and harmless - Al Capone to over-ride his duty to protect the public.

As well as claiming that he had ordered the murders of some three hundred men, Ness spins his readers a fantasy about Capone moving into legitimate businesses (39) where he began bombing his rivals. The public didn't like it, he says. (40) Doubtless such bombings did occur, and by the same token the public wouldn't have liked them (the public has never been overly fond of bombings), but again this is innuendo, and as always it is easy to libel the dead, because they cannot answer back. Al Capone was never proved guilty of bombing anymore than he was proved guilty of murder.

Probably the height of Ness's chutzpah is his suggestion that an attempt on his life shortly after one of his raids, was the work of the Capone gang. (41) The fact that Capone was in gaol at the time (on the aforementioned firearms misdemeanour) didn't prevent poor Al from being blamed even for this. This supposedly so Machiavellian *gangster* couldn't prevent the state conspiracy from throwing him into gaol on a bum rap, yet at the same time he is supposed to have ordered the execution of a Justice Department official. (42)

Let us state this again loud and clear: Al Capone was never convicted of murder, nor was he ever convicted of the bombing of any individual or property. Ness's assertions are exactly that, assertions, and totally baseless ones at that, because if there had been the slightest evidence against him he would have been charged, and more than likely, convicted. It beggars belief that the Chicago police - however corrupt they may have been - would have allowed Capone or anyone to get away with eight murders (the St. Valentine's Day Massacre), and it is simply inconceivable that a man who didn't have enough know-how to escape a gaol sentence for a firearms misdemeanour would have had the savvy to order and escape retribution for such an heinous crime.

Furthermore, although there was public outrage at the St. Valentine's Day Massacre, and other gangland killings, none of this outrage was directed at Capone. If the public had really believed any of the mud that was flung at him, they would have shown their displeasure by boycotting him and buying their liquor from someone else. It is most likely that Ness, the police and the other authorities continued to lay the blame on Capone for half the murders and other crimes in Chicago because he was a convenient scapegoat. He was - against his will - a high profile public figure; he was also a big man with a scar on his face who looked the part of the gangster or hood; (43) he was not part of the establishment, he had humble origins. And he was of Italian extraction. All they had to do was blame it all on that devious schemer and gangster Capone, mutter under their breath about how they couldn't touch him because he was protected or had City Hall in his pocket, or some such twaddle, and they wouldn't need to justify their failure to catch the real perpetrators of the dastardly deeds. And their own incompetence.

Again, rather than being either a murderer or a bomber, Al Capone was a successful businessman who was singled out by both the police and the Federal Government because his face didn't fit. In short, he was simply yet another victim of well-orchestrated, vindictive and totally arbitrary state harassment.

### He Was Cleared, Therefore He Did It

The world is full of conspiracies, but conspiracy theorists are frequently met with derision, often with good reason. Some people who postulate conspiracy theories interpret all evidence against their particular theory as evidence for it. There are some people - mostly Christian Fundamentalists - who believe that Satanists snatch thousands of people off the streets of America every year in order to sacrifice them to the Devil. When police departments and the FBI have investigated alleged organised Satanic activity and abuse, they have found precisely nothing. (44) So what happens? They go into the plot as well. Thus the fact that no bodies are found proves only that the wicked Satanists are so clever at covering up their trail. The fact that neither the police nor the Feds come up with any evidence means that both the police departments and the FBI have been infiltrated and taken over by the Satanists' network. And when Al Capone was cleared of a crime, why, the obvious explanation, indeed the only explanation, is that he corrupted the authorities with his terrible power of the purse.

One Capone biographer mentions a case in 1922 when Capone was charged with assault with an automobile, driving while intoxicated and carrying a concealed weapon. The case never came to trial because, we are told "The charges were mysteriously dropped, expunged from the record." (45) Another author has likewise concluded that because Capone had no criminal record he must have bribed some official so that "irritating documentation could be consigned to oblivion." (46)

Notwithstanding the fact that most of the time many of these very same officials were doing their best to make the poor man's life a misery, this is, once again, pure innuendo. The simple fact is that many people who are charged with all manner of criminal offences never see the inside of a courtroom because the charges are dropped. As to why the charges are dropped, there can be all manner of reasons. One is that frequently the police overstep the mark or even fit people up. If this were not the case then anyone who was ever charged with a criminal offence would be convicted. This is only intelligent speculation, but I would say that it is likely in the above case that Capone was arrested on a totally bum rap and that he threatened to sue the police, or something of that nature. And they backed down.

Another, quite likely explanation, is that the police realised they had gone too far without any such prompting, because in 1922, Capone was *one of their own*, so to speak. (47) Whatever, it should never be forgotten that although by this time, Capone had long since embarked on his life of *crime*, he was still at this time a very minor player. If he couldn't beat a bum firearm rap when he was kingpin, it is most unlikely that he could use his supposedly Machiavellian powers to extricate himself from more serious charges seven years earlier. Any suggestions to the contrary are simply loaded speculation, innuendo and the usual cheap shots.

### Al Capone The Entrepreneur Versus Eliot Ness The Destroyer - How It Really Was

When one reads communist and similar publications today, the thing which impresses the reader more than anything else is the sheer hatred, venom and nastiness that communists and their fellow travellers exhibit against anyone who has made good. Businessmen who have built great industrial, retail, wholesale and other empires, through their own effort, industriousness, and often self-sacrifice are portrayed as parasites who prey off the masses in a relentless quest for profit. A particularly nasty example of this perverted reasoning is the anarchist publication *Class War*, which, in its February/March 1995 issue published the following attack on Richard Branson, who had committed the cardinal sin of transporting a cargo on one of his Virgin Airways planes "free of charge". This is hardly the act of a parasitic capitalist, but instead of being applauded, Mr Branson was lambasted by what was a thinly veiled murder threat: "Three cheers for Mr Branson? More like three swift blows from a baseball bat. He can wear as much body armour as he likes, but this prat's days are truly numbered." (48)

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While it is unquestionably true that some capitalists are money graspers, this is a personality defect that can be found throughout all strata of society. And although he didn't come from the same humble origins as Al Capone, Richard Branson is still very much a self-made man. (49)

This anti-capitalistic mentality was very much alive in the 1920s in the wake of the Bolshevik Revolution. There has never been any suggestion that Eliot Ness was a communist or fellow traveller, but the same hatred of financial success and desire to tear down successful business enterprises manifests itself in many people who are employed, ostensibly, as public servants, yet who spend the better parts of their careers harassing the more productive and industrious members of the community.

Ness claimed in his autobiography that at one time the Capone Syndicate was estimated to have had an income of nearly \$120 million. (50) A year, presumably. Although this figure is almost certainly wildly exaggerated, his claim that *the mob* had 20 breweries churning out 100 barrels of beer a day (51) is probably not far wide of the mark.

No credit is given by Ness - or by any servant of that Draconian instrument of statist repression known as the Federal Government - for the positive achievements of the Capone syndicate. Here was a man who came from poor immigrant stock, from the humblest of origins, and who, together with many people from similar backgrounds, built a thriving, prosperous business. (52) A man whose organisation employed people in no less than twenty locations in and around Chicago. If Capone hadn't employed these men (and women?) what would they have been doing? Most likely lounging around on street corners or living off the dole - or whatever they had in 1920s America. A good many of these people were grateful to this so-called gangster for giving them a livelihood, and enabling them to feed their families. And Mr Capone's customers were obviously satisfied; let us repeat, no one was ever forced to attend speakeasies, no one was ever forced to buy and drink Capone's beer.

Capone himself saw through the hypocrisy and humbug of the corrupt system which portrayed him and his kind as parasites rather than the service providers they were. He enunciated his views with crystal clear lucidity worthy of a latter day John Stuart Mill: "They call Al Capone a bootlegger", he told one author, "Yes, it's bootleg while it's on the trucks, but when your host at the club, in the locker room, or on the Gold Coast hands it to you on a silver tray, it's hospitality. What's Al Capone done, then? He's supplied a legitimate demand. Some call it bootlegging. Some call it racketeering. I call it a business." (53) He put it even more succinctly on another occasion when he told a woman "They talk about me not being on the legitimate. Why, lady, nobody's on the legit., when it comes down to cases; you know that." (54)

As well as his commitment to the free enterprise system, Capone exhibited a trait which he has seldom been given credit for, a broader commitment to American ideals and a fierce, if concealed, patriotism. "My rackets are run on strictly American lines and they're going to stay that way", he told one author. (55) And, "Don't get the idea that I'm one of these goddam radicals. Don't get the idea that I'm knocking the American system." (56)

This was Al Capone, entrepreneur, public servant. We know what he did; in his own words he provided a service, he was a businessman whose customers in turn provided hospitality. So what was Eliot Ness? And what did he do?

In his book, Ness boasts that on one raid alone a staggering \$75,000 worth of plant was seized. (57) On another raid, mentioned on page 94 of his book, Ness boasts that six men were arrested and that beer and equipment valued at \$100,000 was destroyed. On page 162 of this 190 page catalogue of destruction, the reader is told that it was difficult to find breweries because he and his gang had closed more than 30 large plants, seized 45 trucks and destroyed millions of dollars worth of equipment. There you have it in his own words. Ness, at the behest of the United States Government, set out to destroy the livelihoods of ordinary people, and millions of dollars' worth of expensive capital equipment.

Earlier I said that Al Capone's so-called rackets gave people (dozens or perhaps even hundreds of them) a livelihood, taking them off the street. In fact, Capone's service to society goes far beyond that, because many of the people he employed were the type who then - and today - can find employment *only* in this sort of activity. It is a truism that once a dog has a bad name, nobody wants to go near it. Many of the people who found their way onto Scarface Al's payroll were ex-cons and assorted lowlife, [sic] the sort of people no regular employer would want to take on. If these gangsters, petty crooks and no-goods hadn't been engaged in the production and distribution of bootleg booze, it is more than likely that the Devil would have found villainous work for their idle hands, and that they would have taken to mugging old ladies, burglary, armed robbery, and worse. It is not too much of an exaggeration to say that, rather than contributing to the proliferation of crime in 1920s Chicago, Al Capone actually helped keep the crime rate down.

## Capone The Peacemaker: Ness Lets The Cat Out Of The Bag

Although in his autobiography, Ness does his best to portray Capone as some sort of machine gun wielding vampire whose hands were dripping with blood, we have established already in this short study that Scarface Al was never convicted of murder and that all the allegations against him of racketeering were and remain nothing more than hearsay. There are people who will claim that there were so many rumours about Capone's involvement in Organised Crime, including organised murder, that some of them must be true, but we must point out again that this simply is not the case. Let me draw an analogy with Jack the Ripper. Whilst there is no doubt at all that a number of women were murdered in London's Whitechapel in the late 1880s, and little doubt that some of them were murdered by the same person, who was never brought to justice, there are more theories about Jack the Ripper than most people have had hot dinners.

In reality, most of these *theories* are simply wild speculation, likewise all or most of them are mutually exclusive, for the Ripper can hardly have been a policeman, a woman, a gorilla, a member of the Royal family, the Queen's physician and a mad Russian doctor simultaneously. (58) By the same token, although a number of apparently gang-related murders were committed in Chicago during the Capone era, there is no good reason anymore than there is any good evidence that all or any of them were ordered by Al Capone. The simple fact is that Al Capone was a successful businessman, and as we have pointed out already, such success, especially by a man of no great education who had risen from relative poverty, generates envy, contempt, bitterness and hatred for its own sake. Probably 99% of the unpleasant things that have been written about Capone over the years had absolutely no basis in fact. And, it should never be forgotten, most of these unpleasant things were written by men like Eliot Ness, or inspired by him and his ilk.

Ness himself has done an excellent hatchet job on Capone, until one does some basic textual analysis and compares his wild assertions with the documented facts, but even as he is slagging off this so-called gangster, he inadvertently lets the cat out of the bag, for, rather than being any sort of mass murderer, Al Capone is revealed as a peace-loving man who actually *saved* lives. As always, the proof of the pudding is in the eating: here is what Ness says when he lets his guard down.

Capone ruled Chicago "with an iron fist in a glove of steel", (59) but, "Rarely did hate actuate him; when it did, however, those who had incurred his wrath were marked for death." (60) Rarely? This is a man who earlier, according to Ness, had ordered or been responsible for some three hundred murders by 1929. As Capone became a junior partner in so-called organised crime only in 1920, (when Johnny Torrio succeeded 'Diamond Jim' Colosimo), that works out to three hundred murders in nine years, which is about thirty-three a year, ie more than one a fortnight. In practice though, Capone wouldn't have been in a position to order murders until he became kingpin five years later, so allowing for him having killed a few people before - and where is the evidence? - we are looking at a man who, by Ness's earlier reckoning, must have been having people dispatched every few days.

Okay, what have we got so far? A man who was rarely angry, yet ordered people killed as frequently as most people change their underwear. Next, Ness tells his readers that when Capone was in gaol on the bum firearm rap, the murder rate rose: "There had been frequent gang murders in the few months preceding Scarface Al's return. A serious breach was threatening to disrupt the peace treaty Capone had negotiated at Atlantic City." (61) In other words, rather than ordering gang murders, Capone had waged a tireless battle against them and had even succeeded in enforcing a peace treaty. The reason he did this is not far to seek.

His main aim in life was to keep things running smoothly so that his customers had a constant supply of liquor and so that the profits kept running in to his organisation. Even a city which was as corrupt as Chicago allegedly was would not have tolerated gang murders on such a scale, something would have been done. And as Capone had been a big wheel from 1925, there is no doubt that his activities would have been monitored closely since then. As indeed they were. Yet in the end the only things they ever got him for were a firearm misdemeanour - for which they threw the book at him - and income tax evasion. As Capone himself said, "They finally got me for spitting on the sidewalk." (62)

## Capone The Kind And Generous Man

Ness and his ilk would have us believe that Al Capone got away with his crimes [sic] for so long not only because of endemic corruption but because he was feared by the people of Chicago. It may be that Capone was feared, certainly by the competition, but it is far more likely that he was loved, for again, by Ness's admission, he was generous to a tee. Ness says of Capone that, although he was ruthless, he had "the quality of a great businessman" who exhibited "sound judgment, diplomatic shrewdness and the diamond-hard nerves of a gambler, all balanced by cold common sense." (63) Capone was certainly an accomplished diplomat, and like all diplomats he realised that persuasion was always preferable to compulsion, although he was realistic enough to see that in a hard world, hard decisions have to be made, and that while persuasion pays dividends, some people respect only force. He put this philosophy in a nutshell with "You can get much further with a kind word and a gun than you can with a kind word alone." (64)

Though Capone lived in a hard world, Ness, who graduated from the University of Chicago, either didn't understand or didn't want to understand the harsh realities faced by street-wise businessmen who graduated from the school of hard knocks. He, after all, was working for the Federal Government. Whatever results he turned in, even if he didn't make a single arrest, he was still paid because his salary was underwritten by the taxes of the people. But businessmen have to turn a profit or their enterprises go down the tubes. Of course Capone was ruthless, but who benefits from such ruthlessness and the resultant cut-throat competition? The customer, of course!

And Capone was certainly loved, or if he wasn't, he was most highly respected, for as Ness himself says "Capone never carried less than \$50,000 in cash, scattering \$25 tips to hat check girls and \$100 gratuities to waiters." (65) The reader should ask himself if these are the acts of a hoodlum, of the kind of scumbag Ness would have us believe Capone was. The simple fact is that Capone, as stated, came from humble origins, and never forgot it. What sort of man gives a waiter a hundred dollar tip? (66) How about a kind one? Capone was not just from poor immigrant stock, he was of Italian origin. It is likely that many of his family and friends worked in and around the catering and restaurant trades, a traditional stronghold of Italian immigrants. Every time he saw a waiter he probably thought "There but for the grace of God go I". (67)

Capone's legendary generosity even went so far as to offer Ness a retainer, an offer the latter would have us believe he found insulting in the extreme. When a Capone foot soldier turned up at Ness's office with \$2,000 in cash and promised him the same every week "if you'll take it easy", Ness reacted angrily, and, like the inveterate publicity seeker he was, went out of his way to prove his incorruptibility. (68) At least, that's what he tells us. No one was arrested for this attempt to bribe a Federal officer, so it is quite possible or even likely that Ness made the incident up as part of his general campaign of smears and disinformation. Assuming it was true though, what was so terrible about an offer of two thousand dollars a week to "take it easy"?

If Ness had taken this money, he would have benefited, Capone would have benefited, and, ultimately, the City of Chicago would have saved money. Think again of all the people needlessly thrown out of work by the campaign of wanton destruction of private enterprise engaged in by Ness and his cronies. Think again too of the sort of people Capone was employing. How many of them, laid off when their breweries were shut down and their jobs were axed, moved effortlessly from the *underworld* of Al Capone's victimless crimes of selling liquor to willing buyers into the real underworld? How many old ladies were mugged, people burgled, banks robbed, because these otherwise unemployable wretches were denied the opportunity to earn an honest dollar by the caprice of a bigoted government and the simulated outrage of one of its strong arm men?

Ness even had the nerve to try to kid his readers that it was this rejection of Capone's largesse that earned his team the label the Untouchables. This is nonsense, as he knew full well, for a man of his university education could hardly have been unaware of the natural meaning of this term. In India, certain classes of persons are referred to as Untouchables. The *Harijan* include those in certain occupations, such as those killing cattle or disposing of dead cattle, and other "polluting activities". (69) The word Untouchable applied to Ness & co was then not a term of reverence but an insult, an epithet from the Indian sub-continent. Ness and his team of *Untouchables* were seen by the Chicago public not as purifiers of a corrupt system, but as polluters, unwanted interlopers who had been ordered by a mendacious, autocratic Federal Government to destroy the livelihood of one of the community's most respected figures, and, more importantly from their point of view, to prevent them from enjoying the comforts of *the good creature of God*, just because some little fart of a politician with the backing

of Twentieth Century Puritans and killjoys had forced an act through Congress denying the people their inalienable right to drink alcohol.

### Persecuted, Harassed, Slandered, Yet Even In Prison, Capone Put Others First

Socialists are forever telling us that we should work for others, this is something called altruism. It's okay to be altruistic with other people's money, in particular the taxpayers', but when it comes to digging into their own pockets, that's when they are found out. Capone though, always believed he had a duty to society, to put something back. The reader will recall that in 1929, Capone was gaoled on a bum firearm rap. The magistrate who heard this case said he would like to "[rid] the United States of you for ever." (70)

Surely this magistrate would have bit his tongue if he had learned what Capone did while serving his sentence. While he was in prison, he overheard some doctors discussing the case of a young criminal in the hospital who been shot in an attempted hold-up; they were going to amputate his arm. Capone said "Save the boy's arm. If it takes money, I'll be glad to pay for it." (71) This was a young punk Capone didn't know from Adam, yet for him such an act of extraordinary generosity and compassion was *de rigueur*. Incredibly though, there were those, beside the obviously envious and totally worthless Eliot Ness, who interpreted such acts as further evidence of Capone's supposedly evil nature.

### He Was Kind Therefore He Was Evil

Capone biographer Kenneth Allsop wrote that "His individual acts of charity, from a fifty dollar loan to an outright gift to a destitute Italian family, were many. He paid the hospital bills of a woman bystander wounded in a street gun-battle. It is not altogether astonishing that today there are many respectable citizens in Chicago who speak glowingly of Capone's philanthropy and particularly point out that in the early Depression days it was the Capone gang who set up the first soup-kitchens and block-restaurants for the distribution of free food on Thanksgiving Day." (72) On one occasion, Capone sent \$1,200 to a deserving Philadelphia orphanage. (73) Yet while Allsop writes that Capone was revealed in November 1930 as the mysterious benefactor who had set up a huge soup-kitchen, he implies that his motives in doing this were purely selfish, ie that he set it up purely so that the identity of the benefactor could be leaked to the media, in order to show himself in a favourable light. (74)

### Other Persecutions And Anti-Capone Hysteria

As we have demonstrated, Capone was hounded not simply by Eliot Ness but at times by what seemed like the entire establishment. He was actually arrested many times, including for vagrancy! (75) On top of all that, the wildest rumours and nonsense were spread about him. It was said that Capone was taking a cut of the takings of slot machines in Copenhagen because they had been manufactured in Chicago. (76) A book on Capone was banned by libraries in London; (77) a man who wrote a book called *Carrying a Gun for Al Capone* admitted later not only that he had never done any such thing but that he had never even been to Chicago! (78) Some of this nonsense may have been inspired by media sensationalism, or, as most likely, in the case of the fictitious gun-carrying hood, a Walter Mitty personality, but the astute reader will detect here the hidden hand of Capone's declared enemies in officialdom, who, as always, were backed up by the full coercive power of the state. (79)

## Capone Inspired Loyalty From Beyond The Grave

Further evidence of the true nature of Scarface Al surfaced thirty-three years after his death. In August 1980, the British weekly *Titbits* published the story of a woman who claimed to have been his lover, Amelia D'Argenio. (80) She was a young widow when she met Capone and he asked her out, and they quickly became lovers. (81) Capone gave her an allowance which was the equivalent of £150 a week, and said that he would have given her anything in his power, and lavished fur coats, jewellery and money on her. Curiously though she said "I never saw Al with a pistol", (82) which raises the possibility that Capone may even have been fitted up outright for the firearm misdemeanour. (83)

Capone's former lover continued "Of course his 'boys' carried guns - even machine guns - but only to protect their interests." And why shouldn't they have? Even Capone's hostile biographers don't deny that he was frequently targeted for assassination. (84) Surely this is a clear case of defending one's property rights and even more importantly, one's life, by the right to bear arms, which is enshrined in the US Constitution. D'Argenio even says that "When he ordered a speakeasy to be blown up it was always at night when nobody who was innocent would be killed." (85) This sounds like hearsay, again we must stress that there is no proof that Al Capone ever engaged in such criminal activity as bombing rivals or, as suggested here, against people who had ripped him off. But even if he did authorise strong arm tactics occasionally we have been given a bona fide reason for it here. Because of the Draconian (and stupid) Prohibition law, people in Capone's line of work who were ripped off had either to turn the other cheek or exact summary justice. Bootleggers who turned the other cheek wouldn't have stayed in business long. Here though is *prima facie* evidence that although Capone may have been a bit of a rough diamond, he lived by his own moral code, and that the summary justice he dispensed was neither excessive nor administered with either malice or recklessness.

Capone was in fact in many ways a regular guy: "Al would leave for the office every morning in his armoured car and come home at night in the same car". And his patriotism, which we have already alluded to, was evinced by the huge picture of George Washington and the Stars and Stripes he kept on his office wall. "He loved America." (86)

## A Sick Attempt To Impugn Capone's Patriotism

We should mention here an attempt to portray Capone in a bad light which, although not as sick as portraying this great American entrepreneur as a mass murderer and crook, is pretty low nevertheless. In *The Bootleggers*, Kenneth Allsop says that Capone was not only fond of lying - including about his age - but that he was born in Italy, not America, as he claimed. Allsop says that Capone was born January 6, 1895 at Castel Amara near Rome to his shopkeeper father Gabrielle and mother Theresa. (87) The implication is of course that because Capone was not born in America he couldn't have been a *good American*. This is utter nonsense because America was founded by Europeans, and many contemporary Americans - former President Ronald Reagan for example - are intensely proud of their European (in his case, Irish) heritage. But that doesn't for one moment mean that they are not good Americans.

In any case, this charge against Capone is blatantly false. Another Capone biographer, John Kobler, reports that Capone was indeed born in the United States, in Brooklyn, on January 17, 1899. (16) And, far from reducing his age, Capone actually added a year to his official age. The reason for this was that the fully assimilated all-American son of Italian immigrants married an Irish-American (Mae Coughlin), on December 18, 1918. His bride-to-be was actually two years older than him, something which appears to have embarrassed Capone, so on the marriage certificate, she lowered her age by one year, and he increased his by one. (88) [This is the sort of white lie anyone would tell.] In any case, Capone's parents arrived in the United States in 1893, two years before - according to Allsop - Capone himself was born. (89) Let us return now to the lies and innuendo of Eliot Ness.

## A Strange Incident

As most people know, Al Capone was finally convicted of and gaoled for income tax evasion, but prior to his indictment a most curious incident is reported by Ness. Following the murder of a police reporter who was said to have been on the take, a gun in Ness's files disappeared. This gun was proved by forensic testing to have been one of the same batch as the weapon used in the reporter's murder, and was thought initially to have been the same gun. Ness's reaction to the disappearance of the gun in his files is strange indeed. He says: "The Capone gang - for it could be no other - had started to show its hand. They had entered our offices, probably in the dead of night, and searched for evidence that could be destroyed." (90) Yeah, sure Eliot, but Occam's Razor gives us a far more plausible explanation. To begin with, if the Capone gang had been responsible, surely they would have destroyed a great deal more evidence, perhaps they'd even had bombed or torched the office.

Secondly, the obvious solution is that someone with regular access to the office - perhaps even Ness himself - made this weapon disappear. I wouldn't like to speculate as to the reason Ness or one of his underlings would wish to make a potential murder weapon disappear, but even the dumbest of observers must surely conclude that it is odd Ness should have blamed Capone for this particular piece of legerdemain. Perhaps the Untouchables weren't quite so untouchable after all?

## Trial And Conviction

Although Ness and his team did some impressive work in gathering evidence against Capone (in a purely technical sense), it was the Revenue agents who did the real damage. Capone and sixty-eight members of his syndicate were eventually indicted by a Grand Jury under the *Volstead Act*. This was based on evidence assembled by Ness and his agents, but the tax case took precedence. (91) Capone himself faced three indictments and a possible 34 years in gaol. (92)

In 1989, Britain's leading Libertarian Chris Tame, (93) wrote that if a thug were to accost you in the street and demand your wallet, you wouldn't hesitate to call his actions theft. (94) The crime Al Capone was charged with was refusing to part with his hard-earned money, not to a street thug, but to agents of a repressive régime of new, unhappy Puritans who treated people like common criminals for doing what people of almost all cultures have done since time immemorial, drinking alcohol.

It seems incredible that a law-abiding citizen whose only real crime was a technical infringement of a firearms law, who created a vast business empire, who gave hundreds of people a livelihood, who serviced willing imbibers from all walks of society, who, even by his avowed enemy's admission, brought peace to the streets of Chicago, and undoubtedly saved lives, that a man who did all this, should be treated like a common criminal and threatened with over thirty years in gaol because he decided he knew better what to do with his money than the state. (95)

In spite of Capone's business acumen, he was naïve about the law. At one point he objected "They can't collect legal taxes from illegal money." (96) Unfortunately for him this wasn't true. In 1921 a small time Carolina bootlegger named Manley Sullivan was charged with income tax evasion. He didn't challenge the bootlegging allegation but argued a point of law, that the government was not allowed to tax illegal income. The case went all the way to the Supreme Court. He lost. (97)

Capone was found guilty on counts 1, 5, 9, 13 and 18. He was also given 6 months for contempt of court, was sentenced to a total of eleven years in gaol, fined a total of \$50,000, and ordered to pay \$30,000 costs. As he left the courtroom he was served with an order to freeze his assets by a Revenue official. (98)

## The End Of Prohibition

Al Capone was gaoled in October 1931 and served most of his sentence in Alcatraz. In 1933, Prohibition was ended because, according to the *Encyclopedia Americana*, "the nation's most influential people, as well as the general public, acknowledged that it had failed. It had increased lawlessness and drinking and aggravated alcohol abuse."

(99) Capone himself had gone on record as stating that "Prohibition has made nothing but trouble". (100) Indeed, this must have been apparent from almost the day the *Volstead Act* was passed. In 1929, the U.S. assistant attorney general in charge of liquor law prosecutions, a woman named Mabel Walker Willebrandt, resigned and became an attorney for the wine industry. (101) However, the real reason the great *social experiment* of Prohibition failed, had nothing whatsoever to do with concern for increasing lawlessness, aggravated alcohol abuse or anything of the kind, Prohibition was scrapped for purely commercial reasons, as we will see shortly.

## Capone And Ness: Their Later Careers

Capone's last day in Alcatraz was January 6, 1939. His biographer John Kobler wrote that "For the misdemeanor of failing to file a tax return, he owed another year, reducible by good behavior to about ten months." (102) Again that phrase good behaviour rears its head, somehow it is so out of character with the media image of Capone which Ness and his sycophants and their spiritual heirs have built in the nearly five decades since Scarface Al's death. On his release, Capone lived quietly until his premature death, not just a sick man but a broken one.

We have demonstrated here I think that the myth of Al Capone mass murderer and super-gangster was just that, a myth. Another myth, almost as big, is the myth that Capone was fabulously wealthy. Ness claimed that at one time Capone was worth \$50 million. (103) The *Encyclopedia Americana* - which, having no axe to grind, one would expect to be more reliable - estimated his wealth at his peak in 1927 at a staggering \$100 million. (104) Capone's last lawyer painted a different picture. To wit, his client "never owned the sources of his once vast wealth." He shared with partners and the organisation. He was well provided for but his property was heavily mortgaged and he had to pay off back taxes. (105) Ness's claim that Capone never carried around less than \$50,000 in cash (106) is obviously nonsense of the first order, but Capone's extraordinary personal generosity and kindness were undoubtedly for real. He died January 25, 1947.

Although Capone retired from public life with his gaoling, Ness did not. The Untouchables were disbanded, but Ness remained in government service, and during World War Two he served as Director of Social Protection for the Federal Security Agency and was given the appropriate task for an accomplished brown-noser of "combating venereal disease in and near every military establishment in the United States". (107) How he undertook this awesome task the mind boggles, but the scatological, bird-brained nincompoops who run the United States Government were obviously more than satisfied with his work, and he was awarded a medal for it. He died of a heart attack on May 16, 1957. (108)

## The Making Of Two Myths: TV Lends A Hand

The Untouchables were immortalised by an eponymous TV series, with the actor Robert Stack playing the title role. There was also a much more recent film with Kevin Costner playing Ness. Neither Stack nor Costner could be said to portray Ness as a debonair sort, but Capone, where he appears in any dramatisation, is portrayed as an overweight, unsightly thug, the exact alter ego of the incorruptible Ness. Ness, let it never be forgotten, was a man who, by his own admission, enforced a law he didn't really believe in, who tapped people's telephones and spied on them in numerous other ways, a man who took pride in destroying wealth-creating private enterprise at the behest of a megalithic Federal Government which owed its very existence to the efforts of entrepreneurs like Al Capone. And, to cap it all, this same *gang-buster*, this *Untouchable*, spent the Second World War, not in a military uniform, not even as a Federal agent, but as a government snoop inspecting toilets, lecturing soldiers on the evils of promiscuity, or whatever it is that people who combat venereal disease are obliged to do to earn their sinecures.

## Why Prohibition Was Really Repealed

The *Encyclopedia Americana*'s claim that Prohibition was repealed because "the nation's most influential people, as well as the general public, acknowledged that it had failed" is a lie that has been manufactured from the whole cloth. Many other laws have failed, proved unworkable or counter-productive, but that hasn't prevented them either from remaining in force or being strengthened. The real reason for Prohibition's repeal has less to do with either morality or concern for the welfare of the people than with plain, old-fashioned economics. The reader will recall the signs hung outside the London gin shops guaranteeing to make their customers "drunk for one penny and dead drunk for two pence". Another common vice - besides drunkenness - is the demon weed. During Prohibition, cigarettes retailed for around one penny each! (109) Today, ie 1995, you won't get a bottle of whisky for much less than fifteen quid, while fags will cost you around two pounds fifty for twenty. (110)

Granted that the prices of virtually all commodities will have risen in actual if not real terms since the 18th Century or even since the 1920s, (111) this still leaves a veritable crevasse to fill. And that crevasse has been filled almost entirely by one thing: tax.

The British daily newspaper *Today* reported in its December 10, 1994 issue the following price breakdown for booze, fags and petrol:

In each case the first price is the retail price, the second is the combined tax (duty, sales tax, VAT). The price is given for 20 Marlboro brand cigarettes and one litre of petrol; prices have been rounded to the nearest penny.

	UK	Germany	Australia
Scotch	£12.00 £6.18	£9.50 £3.50	£14.21 £6.11
Wine (bottle)	£2.75 £1.05	84p 6p	£1.10 97p
Beer	99p 22p	40p 4p	60p 36p
Cigs	£2.70 £1.15	£1.90 £1.20	£2.54 89p
Petrol (leaded)	60p 36p	66p 48p	36p 3p
Petrol (unleaded)	53p 31p	60p 40p	35p 3p

It will be seen from the above table that prices vary considerably - as one would expect - from country to country, as do the duties on the various products. In Germany, the duty on unleaded petrol makes up a staggering two thirds of its price at the pumps while in Australia it is less than (less than!) 10%. (112) The reason for the low [sic] duty on petrol in Australia is clearly because of the size of the country. Like the United States, people often have to travel vast distances in the course of their work or daily lives. On the other hand, although Australia is a wine producing country, the tax on a bottle of wine makes up a staggering 88+ % of the cost price! Clearly this tax is totally unnecessary except for the purposes of a) regulating the average Aussie's lifestyle, (113) and b) ripping off the consumer for the express purpose of funding an inflated and totally unnecessary bureaucracy.

Here then is why the so-called great experiment of Prohibition failed, the social policy makers decided that it would be much more worthwhile to legalise booze in order to facilitate yet another gigantic rip-off of the already

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oppressed public. This was the reason, the only reason, the American Government admitted its mistake and repealed the Prohibition law. And it may eventually be the same reason which leads to the repeal of that other and even more outrageous form of Prohibition, the war on drugs. A short survey of this will conclude the current study, first though, let us take a brief look at another, and far less well known aspect of Prohibition, that of the oppression of ethnic minorities.

### An Unexplored Facet Of The Campaign Against Al Capone

We come now to an aspect of the government sponsored campaign to destroy Al Capone which has been written out of the history books. Capone's cardinal sin was that he gave people what they wanted and was spectacularly successful into the bargain. His other sin is that although he was white, he was Latin rather than Anglo-Saxon. This *ethnic bias* - to put it euphemistically - was something that was very prevalent then and is still so today, though now it manifests itself primarily in the war on drugs, but also to some extent in the campaign against that other taboo free market, prostitution.

Capone was of course far from the only American *gangster* of Latin heritage in the 1920s, and Latins were not the only minority involved in servicing a thirsty public, the bootleg industry was also heavily Jewish. The Jewish *gangster* Meyer Lansky (1902-83) was one of many others besides Capone et al who was harassed not only on account of his services to free market capitalism but also because of his birth. Under the Law of Return, any Jew born anywhere in the world has the right to emigrate to Israel; Lansky was refused entry to the country, unquestionably under pressure from the United States Government. "When you're a Jew," he said, "the whole world's against you." (114)

Lansky should have said "When you're not Anglo-Saxon", for it wasn't just the Jews and the Italians, indeed nowadays it is hardly them at all - as most of them have moved up the social ladder into *legitimate* businesses. Nowadays it is, primarily, if you're black, you'll find the authorities jumping on you from a great height when you try to make an honest dollar by providing a service which the United States Government in its wisdom has decided that its citizens are to be denied the pleasure of. The majority of drug dealers in most American inner cities are black, and a great many of those working the streets as whores and pimps are black. Whatever one may think of whores or the men who live off them, there is no element of compulsion in any such transaction. No *john* has to seek out the services of a hooker. (115) Leaving aside the Puritan mentality of many of the people responsible for drafting social policy in the United States, in view of the experience of Capone and that enlightening protest of Lansky, the continued outlawing of a substantial sector of the free market under the pretext of saving people from themselves (116) is nothing less than part of the - for the most part, invisible - class structure of the United States. And one that ensures that if your face doesn't fit, particularly if it's black, you stay right at the bottom.

### The Evil Legacy Of Eliot Ness: The War On Drugs And The End Of The Rule Of Law

One pundit has written of Al Capone that he was "the creation and the victim of his times". (117) This is indeed true. It is also true that the current generation is the victim of Capone's times, because while their good dies with them, the evil that men do lives after them, and few men did more evil than Eliot Ness and the other servants of the corrupt system of statist repression he and they helped to create and maintain. Although Eliot Ness died in 1957, his evil legacy is all around in the United States, and manifests itself in the Draconian legislation which has been ushered through Congress by the tactic of frightening and wilfully deceiving the public in the phony war on drugs.

The drug menace is so terrible, so all-encompassing, such a threat to the survival of civilisation, we are told, that it must be stamped out by any means necessary. The simple fact though is that any man, woman or child can walk into their local supermarket and buy poison, be it boot polish or Vitamin D. (118) The idea that such commonplace commodities should be regulated because they can be dangerous if misused has never quite caught on. It could be that recreational drugs have been singled out for the simple reason that they are recreational, as

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is alcohol. Whatever, the Draconian laws that have been foisted upon the good citizens of America - and other countries - in order, ostensibly, to combat the non-existent drug menace, are now being quietly extended to other areas.

The April 1995 issue of the British Libertarian journal *Free Life* reported the following horror story, one such as could never have happened in Nazi Germany or even in Soviet Russia. In 1992, a woman in Iowa who was accused of shoplifting a \$25 sweater had her \$18,000 automobile - which had been specially equipped for her handicapped daughter - seized as a getaway car! (119) This was made possible by civil asset forfeiture legislation, in particular the *Comprehensive Forfeiture Act 1984*.

Civil asset forfeiture legislation was designed to inhibit so-called racketeering, which in Ness's day was centred on booze but is today centred on drugs. One 1992 report claimed that an estimated \$85 billion of illegal drug money a year was being laundered through banks in the United States and Europe. (120) While a certain amount of illegal drug money - perhaps even a great deal - is without doubt *laundered* through the banking system and legitimate businesses, it is most unlikely that this figure has any basis in fact, or if the true figure can even be reasonably estimated. (121)

Such legislation as civil asset forfeiture is nothing less than a direct and wilful usurpation of the rule of law, and has consequences for every citizen which make it possible - and in the near future probable - that anytime he (or she) steps out of line, he will be jumped on from a great height by the powers that be. Imagine the following scenario. You are a publisher; you publish a book or magazine which is highly critical of a government agency, or exposes police corruption. After an *anonymous* tip off the police raid your premises and find (or plant) traces of cocaine on a dollar bill in your safe. (122) They confiscate your business, your bank account, the lot. (123) Theoretically, this course of action could be used against the wealthiest men in the country as a catch-all device to confiscate all their assets. So, if your name is Bill Gates and a police officer performing a *random* search at a road block happens to *find* a spliff in your car, you can kiss goodbye to Microsoft.

Anti-drug hysteria has also led to a law which makes it mandatory to record all cash transactions over \$10,000. Such regulation and people control must lead not only inevitably to tyranny but to the strangulation of the economy. It is this which is the true legacy of Eliot Ness, and frankly, the society which turned him and his kind into heroes, deserves everything it gets.

## Notes And References

- (1) Although this short study is a Revisionist History, it is not concerned so much with rewriting history as with reinterpreting it. For this reason I have not deemed it necessary to work from primary sources but instead have concentrated on an authoritative biography of Al Capone, one or two related works, and the unquestionably biased memoirs of his principal accuser. In any case, the documented facts of Capone's and Ness's careers are non-contentious, or will be once the fog of statist propaganda has been lifted from the reader's mind.
- (2) As indeed they were, but why the instantaneous vaporisation of tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children by the atomic bombs should be left out of this equation is a matter for eternal speculation. Presumably the Japanese, being slit-eyed, sub-human ant-men, don't count.
- (3) *The Great Illusion: AN INFORMAL HISTORY OF PROHIBITION*, by Herbert Asbury, published by Doubleday, Garden City, New York, (1950), page 22.
- (4) Of course, two pence was not quite so *mere* in those days, but, even taking into account the vastly increased material wealth and spending power of the ordinary 1990s' working person, the price of alcohol was far less then in real terms than it is today.
- (5) I am not aware of any great temperance movement in Saudi Arabia or Pakistan, either in the present or any time in the past. For them, drinking alcohol is simply something no good Moslem ever does.
- (6) For the record, the *Mayflower* had previously been used as a wine ship!
- (7) Asbury, *The Great Illusion*, page 21, (op cit).
- (8) Asbury, *The Great Illusion*, page 23, (ibid).
- (9) For several examples of this nonsense the reader is referred to Asbury, *The Great Illusion*, pages 42-4, (ibid).
- (10) Asbury, *The Great Illusion*, page 3, (ibid).
- (11) Asbury, *The Great Illusion*, page 3, (ibid). The same author tells us (page 7) that the price eventually rose to 250 gallons; this was more likely a reflection of economic realities than of concern for one's fellow man.
- (12) See the entry for *PROHIBITION* in the *Encyclopedia Americana*, (1977), Volume 22, pages 646-8.
- (13) It is by no means certain that drinkers were in a minority here (of the enfranchised population), but even today this nonsense is used to justify all manner of state repression. The reasoning appears to be "if people shouldn't do it, there ought to be a law against it. It remains to be seen who says people shouldn't do it.
- (14) From the essay *Collectivized "Rights"*, in *THE VIRTUE OF SELFISHNESS: A New Concept of Egoism*, published by Signet, New York, (December 1964), page 104.
- (15) *Encyclopedia Americana*, entry for *PROHIBITION*, (op cit).
- (16) *CAPONE: The Life and World of Al Capone*, by John Kobler, published by Michael Joseph, London, (1972), page 378.
- (17) Kobler, *Capone*, page 56, (ibid). [Capone grew up in New York.]
- (18) *THE UNTOUCHABLES*, by Eliot Ness with Oscar Fraley, published by Pan, London, (1960), page 31. This, like much of the information in this short study, has been gleaned from the above book by Eliot Ness. However, as the reader will soon learn, Ness is not the most objective of authors - to put it mildly - so the reader will have to do what I have done and apply his critical faculties to sort the wheat from the chaff. This claim though is non-contentious, and much of what appears here can be confirmed from other sources.
- (19) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 32, (ibid). According to Ness, Colosimo was a racketeer, in reality he was simply another businessman responding to consumer demand.
- (20) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 33, (ibid).
- (21) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 34, (ibid).
- (22) Competition on a level playing field and unfettered by the state is healthy, but where businessmen have no alternative but to work outside the law, all manner of evil forces come into play.
- (23) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 30, (op cit).
- (24) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 9, (ibid).
- (25) Kobler, *Capone*, page 271, (op cit).
- (26) Kobler, *Capone*, page 101, (ibid).
- (27) Kobler, *Capone*, page 108, (ibid).
- (28) Kobler, *Capone*, page 271, (ibid).
- (29) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 34, (op cit).

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(30) *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 24, page 138. The encyclopaedia actually reports that eight gang members were gunned down in this infamous incident. In reality, one of the eight was not a member of the gang. The mass execution was carried out by gangsters disguised as police officers who simply lined their victims up and machine gunned them to death. No one was ever brought to justice for this terrible crime, although to this day it is laid at Capone's feet.

(31) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 30, (op cit).

(32) *THE BLOOMSBURY DICTIONARY OF QUOTATIONS*, published by Bloomsbury, London, (1987), page 90. A number of Capone's memorable quotations have found their way into such tomes.

(33) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 80, (op cit).

(34) It may be that Capone had one or more previous convictions for some sort of minor offence, but if he did I have found no trace of it. The truth is that, as well as being an industrious businessman, up until May 1929, Scarface Al appears to have been a person of good character.

(35) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 80, (op cit).

(36) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 80, (ibid).

(37) *The Bootleggers: THE STORY OF CHICAGO'S PROHIBITION ERA*, by Kenneth Allsop, published by Hutchinson, London, (1968), page 296.

(38) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 96, (op cit).

(39) This is nothing unusual, many businessmen carve out successful careers in totally disparate enterprises. For example, the well-known entrepreneur Richard Branson started out running a magazine, moved swiftly and smoothly into the record business, and ended up running an airline, among other things.

(40) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, pages 34-5, (op cit).

(41) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, pages 95, (ibid).

(42) I am not suggesting that Ness was lying about the assassination attempt, but it is likely that many people who were seeing their livelihoods destroyed wanted him dead. On what evidence did he blame a man who was at that very moment in gaol?

(43) Will people never realise they should never judge a book by its cover?

(44) That notwithstanding, there have been a number of well-publicised cases where people have been convicted of Satanic and related abuse against very young children on the most absurd evidence. We have of course seen similar hysteria and nonsense here, in both the Cleveland child abuse case and the Orkneys case. For an excellent study of this subject from an American viewpoint, the reader is referred to *IN PURSUIT OF SATAN: THE POLICE AND THE OCCULT*, by Robert D. Hicks, published by Prometheus Books, Buffalo, New York, (1991).

(45) *AL CAPONE: THE BIOGRAPHY OF A SELF-MADE MAN*, by Fred D. Pasley, published by Faber & Faber, London, (1966), page 19.

(46) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 283, (op cit).

(47) Pasley, *Al Capone*, pages 19-20, (op cit), reports that Capone was at this time a special deputy!

(48) The full story is that following a well publicised series of attacks on British police officers - some of them fatal - American police departments had donated large quantities of body armour to their British colleagues. Branson had simply offered his services and transported the armour across the Atlantic free of charge.

(49) The official biography, *Richard Branson: The Inside Story*, by Mick Brown, was first published by Michael Joseph in 1988. It reveals that, among other things, some of Branson's early business ventures ended in failure, at times he had to duck creditors, he got ripped off more than once, and he broke up the major record companies' cartel - and thereby benefited the record buying public. He has also donated not a little of his hard earned fortune to health education and AIDS research.

(50) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 11, (op cit).

(51) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 11, (ibid).

(52) Envy obviously enters the equation somewhere. Often, university graduates like Ness find the idea of (at times) barely literate men achieving spectacular financial success while they are stuck in salaried, and often dead end, jobs. Al Capone was not the most literate of men, but he was no ignoramus either. In his biography of Capone, Pasley writes that he was "fluent as to topics of the turf, the ring, the stage, the gridiron, and the baseball field; what the police reporters call 'a right guy'..."

(53) Pasley, *Al Capone*, (ibid). This quote is actually taken from page 4 of the *INTRODUCTION*, by Andrew Sinclair.

(54) This is attributed to Capone in Pasley's book but is taken here from *THE DICTIONARY OF BIOGRAPHICAL QUOTATION OF BRITISH AND AMERICAN SUBJECTS*, Edited by Justin Wintle & Richard Kenin, published by Routledge & Kegan Paul, London, (1978), page 138.

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(55) Wintle & Kenin, page 138, (ibid).

(56) Wintle & Kenin, page 138, (ibid).

(57) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 55, (op cit). You couldn't buy an apartment in London with that sort of money in 1995, but seventy years ago it was a veritable fortune. According to a recent pamphlet by the Socialist Party of Great Britain (*SOCIALIST STUDIES NO. 16*), prices in Britain are some thirty times greater than they were in 1938, so we can estimate, conservatively, that this seizure corresponded to about \$2 million at today's prices.

(58) For further information on the nonsense and speculation surrounding Jack the Ripper, the reader is referred in the first instance to Alexander Kelly's *JACK THE RIPPER: A BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE*, published by the Association of Assistant Librarians, South East Division, London, revised and expanded edition, (1984).

(59) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 95, (op cit).

(60) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 98, (ibid).

(61) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 100, (ibid). Allsop also mentions "the Capone Peace Plan" in his book, *The Bootleggers*, (see pages 118-21).

(62) Although I haven't been able to find a printed reference, I am sure I have seen (or heard) this quote attributed to Capone somewhere.

(63) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 98, (op cit).

(64) *THE DICTIONARY OF OUTRAGEOUS QUOTATIONS*, Compiled and Introduced by C.R.S. Marsden, published by Xanadu, London, (1988), page 79.

(65) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 98, (op cit).

(66) The reader is again reminded that we are talking about 1920s prices; a hundred dollar tip would be considered excessive even in an expensive restaurant today.

(67) Capone's father, Gabrielle, worked as a shopkeeper and as a barber.

(68) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 105, (op cit).

(69) See for example *Encyclopaedia Britannica, Micropaedia*, Volume 12, Fifteenth Edition, (1994), page 188.

(70) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 295, (op cit).

(71) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 296, (ibid).

(72) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, pages 280-1, (ibid).

(73) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 280, (ibid).

(74) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, pages 311-2, (ibid). There may be a grain of truth in this claim, but after all the bad press he had suffered, could one really blame him if this was indeed the case? Capone was said to have claimed that persons of wealth like himself should take the responsibility of feeding the poor in these hard times.

(75) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, see pages 295 and 308, (ibid).

(76) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 311, (ibid).

(77) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 311, (ibid).

(78) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 278, (ibid).

(79) It wasn't until many years after Capone's death that the reality of COINTELPRO could be confirmed. The FBI's Counter-Intelligence Program has usually been directed at political extremists of both the left and the right, and often involved the incitement of criminal acts, but more frequently it consisted of spreading disinformation, which in Capone's case would have consisted of circulating wild rumours about his involvement in gang murders and so forth. None of this nonsense need ever have any basis whatsoever in fact, but can be successful simply because mud sticks. Especially when it is thrown by the bucket!

(80) Capone was something of a ladies' man and almost certainly had other clandestine lovers. Having said that, he was also a devout family man - the two are not incompatible! - and doted on his son, his only child. Whilst in prison he developed syphilis which almost certainly contributed to his premature death. (This was before the advent of penicillin). He died January 25, 1947 from a brain haemorrhage and complications.

(81) The current writer could find no mention of Amelia D'Argenio in any of the books concerning Capone he consulted. It may of course be that she simply told this magazine a tall story, or perhaps she went under another name during her time in the United States. My personal view is that she has been written out of the official biography of Capone because - assuming what she says is true - it demonstrates once again the extraordinary personal largess of this quite remarkable man.

(82) *MY LIFE OF LOVE WITH AL CAPONE* By the woman who still adores 'Scarface', by Sarah Pye, published in *Titbits*, August 30, 1980, page 28.

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(83) The reader may ask if this is true why did Capone not protest this at the time? The reason - if this was indeed the case - was probably that in those days one did not make such allegations lightly, however endemic the corruption of police, local government and other officials may have been under Prohibition. If Capone had been fitted up as well as stitched up, any protests by him or his lawyer may have been rewarded with further duplicity.

(84) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 293, (op cit), speaks of frequent attempts on Capone's life.

(85) *MY LIFE OF LOVE WITH AL CAPONE*, (op cit).

(86) *MY LIFE OF LOVE WITH AL CAPONE*, (ibid).

(87) Allsop, *The Bootleggers*, page 283, (op cit). Needless to say, Ness made the same claim. In *The Untouchables* [page 31, (op cit)], he claims that Capone was born in Naples on January 17, 1899.

(88) Kobler, *Capone*, pages 36-7, (ibid). Kobler's book appears to be the more thoroughly researched and the least hostile of the Capone biographies and books which touch on the gangster's life.

(89) Kobler, *Capone*, page 18, (ibid). [Capone's family arrived in the USA in 1893 from the slums of Naples.]

(90) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 113, (op cit).

(91) Kobler, *Capone*, (op cit). See in particular pages 271 and 322.

(92) Kobler, *Capone*, page 328, (ibid).

(93) *TAXATION IS THEFT*, by Chris R. Tame, Political Notes No. 44, published by the Libertarian Alliance, London, (1989). This leaflet was actually first published several years earlier.

(94) Most people would actually call such an act robbery with violence, which is even worse!

(95) It hardly needs reiterating that Al Capone's money wasn't frittered away but was invested in wealth producing enterprises. It has been proven time and time again that money confiscated from the likes of Capone does not contribute to the net wealth of the community but rather impoverishes it by reducing investment. The reader is referred in particular to the devastating critique of socialism by Ayn Rand, *The Inverted Moral Priorities*, published in the 1989 book *The Voice of Reason: Essays in Objectivist Thought*, Edited by Leonard Peikoff.

(96) *Bloomsbury Dictionary Of Quotations*, page 90, (op cit). Illegal in a technical sense only.

(97) *THE TAX DODGERS: The Inside Story of the T-Men's War with America's Political and Underworld Hoodlums*, by Elmer L. Irey with William J. Slocum, published by The Fireside Press, London, (April 1949), pages 10-1.

(98) Kobler, *Capone*, page 341-2, (op cit).

(99) *PROHIBITION* article, (op cit).

(100) *STEVENSON'S BOOK OF QUOTATIONS*, published by Cassell, London, 10th Edition, (1974), Volume 2, page 1619. This quote was made, apparently, to a newspaper.

(101) *Encyclopedia Americana*, see entry for *PROHIBITION*, (op cit).

(102) Kobler, *Capone*, page 372, (op cit).

(103) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 98, (op cit).

(104) *Encyclopedia Americana*, see entry for *CAPONE, AL*, Volume 5, page 607. This figure is said to come from "Government agencies"; the *Americana* says also that Capone was born in Naples in January 1899. The long departed Ness may well have had a hand in this entry.

(105) Kobler, *Capone*, page 382, (op cit).

(106) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 98, (op cit).

(107) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 189, (ibid).

(108) Ness & Fraley, *The Untouchables*, page 190, (ibid). [The first edition of Ness & Fraley's book was published in 1957.]

(109) The current writer found an amusing advertisement while researching contemporary political journals at the Newspaper Library. In its September 26, 1925 issue (page 4), *THE FASCIST BULLETIN: The only Organ of the British Fascists*, ran an advertisement for *FASCIST CIGARETTES*. Readers were instructed to send their orders to CIGARETTE DEPARTMENT, THE BRITISH FASCISTS. The selling price of 41 shillings per thousand included a 9 shilling profit! In August 1962, an advertisement in the *Daily Mirror* offered OLYMPIC tipped cigarettes at 2s. 10d for 20, which will perhaps give the reader some idea of just how much the smoking public is being screwed by the government.

(110) I visited my local supermarket and the cheapest Scotch I saw on offer was £14.99 a litre; cigarettes were £2.50 for twenty. Doubtless there are cheaper of both available, but not much cheaper.

(111) About the only prices that ever do fall in actual units of currency are those of computers and the related technology. The 18 April 1992 issue of the popular weekly *New Scientist* reported that "In THE 1950s, an electronic circuit that could store a single 'bit' of information cost more than £1. Today, a penny will buy 5000 of them."

(112) The idea of a tax being *less than* anything has always seemed somewhat novel to me and to most Libertarians. (Echoing Tame's *Taxation Is Theft* paper), consider this proposition: you are selling your goods on your market

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stall or in your shop and after every transaction a man walks through the door, points a gun to your head and says "Give me 10% of the last purchase." Would you consider that reasonable?

(113) This is what is known as health fascism; the health fascist lobby in Britain is made up of such organisations as the Health Education Authority and Action on Smoking and Health.

(114) Quoted in *National Review*, March 16, 1992, page S-5.

(115) I hate that disgusting American euphemism but I'll let it ride this once.

(116) With drugs the cry has usually been that people must be saved from the wicked drug pushers. In reality, the picture of the drug pusher offering the first shot free, is a piece of fiction. People have always sought out drug pushers the same way they sought out bootleggers.

(117) Andrew Sinclair in *Pasley, Al Capone*, page 4, (op cit).

(118) Vitamin D is extremely toxic, but technically so is everything we eat and drink. In fact we breathe the most toxic substance known to man; oxygen corrodes nearly everything it comes into contact with. An ancient physician once made the observation that poison taken in the correct dose is medicine while medicine taken in the incorrect dose is poison. People have been known to die from drinking large quantities of water very quickly.

(119) See the lengthy article *A Second American Revolution?* by Anthony Furlong, published in *Free Life*, April 1995, issue 22, pages 4-6, which contains an analysis of this and related horror stories.

In Nazi Germany, Jews whose property was *Aryanised* received some compensation, while the main gripe against Soviet Russia in this field is not that it ripped off the workers but that the communist system was so inefficient that it didn't generate enough wealth to give all but the smallest minority a reasonably high standard of living.

(120) *Bank of England Quarterly Bulletin*, November 1992, Volume 32, Number 4, page 418.

(121) To the current writer this looks like one of those statistics that has been plucked out of thin air. It is more reminiscent of the lunatic claims of Christian Fundamentalists that 50,000 people are snatched off America's streets every year and sacrificed to the Devil than of anything rational.

(122) The *Free Life* article already cited reports that it was estimated by one American newspaper that over 90% of all cash circulating in the United States shows some drug residue. Whether or not this is true, we have the technology now that can detect substances in such minute quantity - literally one part in trillions - that the point is academic.

(123) A point made by the *Free Life* article is that even if you are completely exonerated you can still be crippled by legal fees and not have your property returned.

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